

House Resolution

No. 41

Introduced by Assembly Member Burke

(Coauthors: Assembly Members Brown, Cooper, Gipson, Holden, Jones-Sawyer, McCarty, Ridley-Thomas, Thurmond, and Weber Weber, Achadjian, Alejo, Baker, Bonilla, Brough, Calderon, Campos, Chang, Chau, Chávez, Chu, Cooley, Dahle, Daly, Dodd, Eggman, Frazier, Beth Gaines, Gallagher, Cristina Garcia, Eduardo Garcia, Gatto, Gonzalez, Gordon, Gray, Grove, Hadley, Harper, Roger Hernández, Irwin, Jones, Lackey, Levine, Linder, Lopez, Maienschein, Mathis, Mayes, Melendez, Mullin, Nazarian, Obernolte, Olsen, Patterson, Quirk, Rendon, Rodriguez, Santiago, Steinorth, Mark Stone, Ting, Wagner, Waldron, Wilk, and Williams)

March 1, 2016

House Resolution No. 41—Relative to Tuskegee Airmen Day.

- 1 WHEREAS, The Tuskegee Airmen is the popular name of the
- 2 very first group of African-American military aviators in the United
- 3 States Armed Forces, and they went on to earn distinction for their
- 4 demonstrated skill as part of the 332nd Fighter Group and the 99th
- 5 Pursuit Squadron of the United States Army Air Corps; and
- 6 WHEREAS, Prior to the Tuskegee Airmen, the United States
- 7 military did not allow African-Americans the opportunity to
- 8 become aviators; and
- 9 WHEREAS, In 1941 Congress forced the Army Air Corps to
- 10 form an African American combat unit, despite the reluctance to
- 11 initiate any form of substantive integration; and

1 WHEREAS, In June 1941, the Airmen were transferred to
2 Tuskegee, Alabama where they received training before they were
3 deemed ready for combat in 1943 and deployed to North Africa
4 to join the 33rd fighter group; and

5 WHEREAS, In the first battle, the Airmen attacked the island
6 of Pantelleria, effectively clearing a path for the Allied forces to
7 invade Sicily where the Italian population was forced to surrender;
8 and

9 WHEREAS, The Tuskegee Airmen broke barriers by working
10 under the exceptional leadership of Benjamin O. Davis Jr., the first
11 black man to hold the rank of general in the United States Air
12 Force; and

13 WHEREAS, The arrival of more African American aviators
14 strengthened the decisive impact of the Tuskegee Airmen despite
15 a scientific report by the University of Texas detailing that African
16 Americans were of low intelligence and lacked the competency
17 to handle complex situations, such as air combat; and

18 WHEREAS, The Tuskegee Airmen earned their place in history
19 further by flying over 15,000 combat sorties on 1,578 missions
20 during World War II, proving instrumental to the liberation of
21 oppressed groups abroad while African Americans still faced their
22 own form of oppression in the United States; and

23 WHEREAS, After receiving the P-51 Mustang fighters with red
24 paint on the tail section of their aircraft, the pilots of the 332nd
25 became known as the Red Tails; and

26 WHEREAS, After segregation in the military was ended in 1948
27 by President Harry S. Truman through Executive Order, the veteran
28 Tuskegee Airmen went on to share their knowledge by teaching
29 civilian flight to other groups such as the black-owned Columbia
30 Air Center in Maryland; and

31 WHEREAS, The Tuskegee Airman broke boundaries for their
32 brave efforts not only in the Air Force, but for the United States
33 more broadly; now, therefore, be it

34 *Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California*, That the
35 California State Assembly designates the 4th Thursday in March
36 as Tuskegee Airmen Day in California; and be it further

37 *Resolved*, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies
38 of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.

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